

House Republican Press Release

June 8, 2005
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Hamzy Votes for Real Campaign Finance Reform; Opposes Taxpayer Financed Campaigns



State Representative William A. Hamzy Wednesday voted for a campaign finance reform measure that would have tightened restrictions on contributions from lobbyists and state contractors to candidates for state and General Assembly offices – without creating a system of taxpayer financing for campaigns for state offices.

The measure, an amendment offered by Representative Hamzy and other legislators that that would have deleted provisions for taxpayer financing for state and General Assembly campaigns from legislation (House Bill 6670) that was being debated in the state House of Representatives early Wednesday morning, was defeated on a party line vote (82 – 53). Most Democrats voted to reject the amendment while most Republicans supported it.

“I voted against the bill that passed the House earlier today that would create a system of taxpayer financing for campaigns for governor and other statewide offices and for the state House and Senate,” Representative Hamzy said. “No matter how the financing scheme is set up, it will mean scarce taxpayer dollars are diverted from critical state programs and projects to pay for election campaigns. Taxpayer financing for election campaigns would force us to either raise taxes or reduce spending for education, public safety, the elderly and for highway and bridge maintenance.”

“Most Connecticut residents strongly oppose using taxpayer dollars to pay for election campaigns,” Representative Hamzy said. “In my district alone, 84 percent of the people who responded to a constituent survey I sent out earlier this year said they were opposed to spending taxpayer dollars on political campaigns. Public opinion in Connecticut has been consistently opposed to taxpayer-financed elections for many years and for good reason - most people want their tax dollars used for traditional government purposes – not to help pay the campaign expenses of politicians they do not support.”

“While I strongly support legislation to limit or eliminate special interest contributions to candidates for statewide offices and for the state House and Senate, I remain firmly opposed to using taxpayer dollars to pay for election campaigns,” Representative Hamzy said. “Real campaign finance reform should focus on encouraging citizens to contribute to and become more involved in campaigns for candidates they support while reducing or

eliminating contributions from special interest groups, lobbyists, unions and state contractors. “

“While I believe individuals and groups whose interests are affected by measures under consideration by the General Assembly have a constitutional right to share their views on issues with state legislators, I also believe they should be required to provide detailed disclosure statements with the State Elections Commission when they contribute money or in-kind services to political campaigns. Citizens need to know which powerful individuals or special interest groups are supporting which candidates to enable them to cast informed votes. I will continue to support campaign finance reform that encourages wider participation in the political process and requires fuller disclosure from special interest groups and people who do business with the state who contribute to political campaigns,” Representative Hamzy said.